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Administration of justice at the United Nations

Outcome of the work of the Joint Appeals Board during 2005 and 2006 and statistics on the disposition of cases and work of the Panel of Counsel

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted in response to the request of the General Assembly to the Secretary-General, in its resolution 55/258 (sect. XI, para. 5), to report to the Assembly on an annual basis on the outcome of the work of the Joint Appeals Board. In response to that request, the report of the Secretary-General on the administration of justice in the Secretariat (A/61/71 and Corr.2) provided information concerning the outcome of the work of the Joint Appeals Board for the period 2004-2005. The present report provides information on the work of all Joint Appeals Boards of the Secretariat (New York, Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi) in 2006. The present report also compares 2006 and 2005 data. In response to the request of the Assembly in its resolution 57/307, the report also provides statistics on the disposition of cases and information on the work of the Panel of Counsel for 2006.

* A/62/150.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 55/258 (sect. XI, para. 5), the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it on an annual basis on the outcome of the work of the Joint Appeals Board. In response to that request, the report of the Secretary-General on the administration of justice in the Secretariat (A/61/71 and Corr.2) provided information on the work of all Joint Appeals Boards of the Secretariat (New York, Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi) for the period 2004-2005. The present report provides information and statistical data on the work of the Joint Appeals Boards in 2006.

2. In its resolution 57/307 (para. 21), the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to include statistics on the disposition of cases and information on the work of the Panel of Counsel in his annual report on the administration of justice in the Secretariat. In response to that request, the above-mentioned report of the Secretary-General on the administration of justice provided information on the disposition of cases and work of the Panel of Counsel for 2005. The present report provides such information for 2006.

II. Outcome of the work of the Joint Appeals Board

3. Table 1 and figure I below set out information, in both numerical and graphic form, on the work of the Joint Appeals Boards in New York, Geneva, Vienna and Nairobi for 2005 and 2006 by providing the number of appeals and suspension of action cases filed and disposed of[1] during those years.

4. As can be seen from the information presented in table 1, there was an increase in the number of appeals filed with the Joint Appeals Boards during 2006. The New York Joint Appeals Board received 9 more appeals in 2006 than in 2005, an increase of 9 per cent. As for the corresponding figures for the other Joint Appeals Boards, the Geneva Board received 3 more appeals as compared with 2005, an increase of 13 per cent. The Vienna Board received 1 more appeal in 2006, an increase of 20 per cent, and the Nairobi Board received 5 fewer appeals, a decrease of 31 per cent.

5. There is also a difference between the two periods in the number of cases disposed of by the Joint Appeals Boards. Both the New York and the Geneva Joint Appeals Boards disposed of more appeals during 2006 than in 2005. Specifically, the number of appeals disposed of by the New York Joint Appeals Board increased by 19 per cent in 2006, while the number of appeals disposed of by the Geneva Joint Appeals Board increased by 4 per cent. The Vienna Joint Appeals Board disposed of 2 more cases in 2006 than during 2005, an increase of 200 per cent, while in Nairobi the Board disposed of 10 fewer cases in 2006 than in 2005, a decrease of 48 per cent. This decrease in the number of cases disposed of by the Nairobi Joint Appeals Board was due to: (a) the post of Secretary, Joint Appeals Board, being vacant for three months in 2006; and (b) the disposal of a backlog of more complex and time-consuming cases that were pending from previous years.

[1] The term "disposed of" refers to appeals with respect to which the Joint Appeals Board has completed its involvement. The figures may include appeals which, though filed during a previous year, were disposed of in subsequent years owing to an existing backlog. This explains why, at times, the number of appeals disposed of is higher than the number of appeals filed.

6. As to the number of pending appeals at the end of the reporting period, the Vienna Joint Appeals Board had 9 pending appeals, the Nairobi Joint Appeals Board had 9 pending appeals, and the Geneva Joint Appeals Board had 33 pending appeals and 13 pending disciplinary cases. The New York Joint Appeals Board continues to have the highest number of pending appeals. As at the end of 2006, there were 93 pending appeals at the New York Joint Appeals Board. The New York Joint Appeals Board also had 25 pending disciplinary cases at the end of 2006.

7. Disciplinary cases are also handled by the secretariats of the Joint Appeals Boards and are always considered on a priority basis. In 2006, 24 disciplinary cases were referred to the New York Joint Disciplinary Committee, which disposed of 18 of those cases. The Geneva Joint Disciplinary Committee received 8 new disciplinary cases during 2006 and disposed of 13 disciplinary cases during the same period. The Nairobi Joint Disciplinary Committee considered 1 disciplinary case. No cases were submitted to the Vienna Joint Disciplinary Committee in 2006.

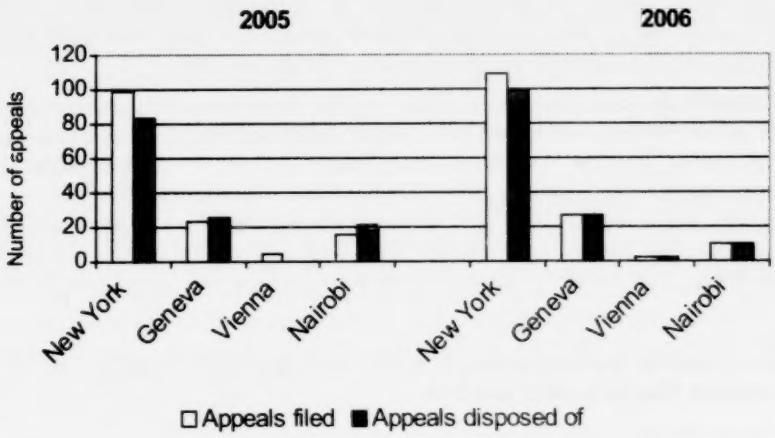
Table 1
Number of appeals and suspension of action cases filed and disposed of by all Joint Appeals Boards in 2005 and 2006

Standing Joint Appeals Boards	*2005*	*2006*	*Variance (percentage)*
New York: appeals filed	99	108	+9
New York: appeals disposed of	83	99[a]	+19
Geneva: appeals filed	24	27	+13
Geneva: appeals disposed of	26	27	+4
Vienna: appeals filed	5	6	+20
Vienna: appeals disposed of	1	3	+200
Nairobi: appeals filed	16	11	-31
Nairobi: appeals disposed of	21	11	-48

[a] One of these appeals comprised 232 cases contesting the same administrative decision, where the Secretary-General, after a long process of negotiations and conciliation, initially agreed to direct submission of the cases to the United Nations Administrative Tribunal and subsequently decided to rescind the contested decision.

Figure I

Number of appeals and suspension of action cases filed and disposed of by all Joint Appeals Boards in 2005 and 2006



8. Tables 2 and 3 and figures II and III below provide, in both numerical and graphic form, information on the decisions taken by the Secretary-General on reports of the Joint Appeals Boards for 2005 and 2006, respectively.

Table 2

Decisions by the Secretary-General on unanimous recommendations of the Joint Appeals Boards on appeals and requests for suspension of action in 2005

Location of Joint Appeals Board	*Decisions on reports of the Board*	*Unanimous recommendations of the Board*	*Unanimous recommendations of the Board fully accepted by the Secretary-General*	*Unanimous recommendations of the Board partially accepted by the Secretary-General*	*Unanimous favourable recommendations of the Board rejected by the Secretary-General*	*Unanimous unfavourable recommendations of the Board*
New York	90	87	69 (79%)	10 (12%)	8 (9%)	35 (40%)
Geneva	18	18	14 (78%)	2 (11%)	2 (11%)	11 (61%)
Vienna	4	4	4 (100%)	0	0	3 (75%)
Nairobi	20	19	14 (74%)	3 (16%)	2 (11%)	11 (58%)
Total	**132**	**128**	**101 (79%)**	**15 (12%)**	**12 (9%)**	**60 (47%)**

91% (full and partial acceptances)

Figure II

Decision by the Secretary-General on unanimous recommendations of the Joint Appeals Boards on appeals and requests for suspension of action in 2005

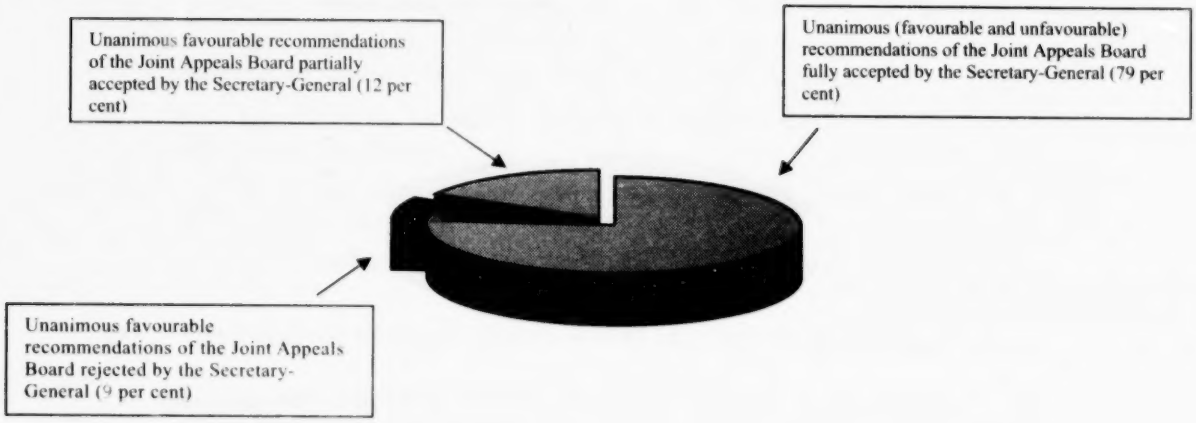

Unanimous favourable recommendations of the Joint Appeals Board partially accepted by the Secretary-General (12 per cent)
Unanimous (favourable and unfavourable) recommendations of the Joint Appeals Board fully accepted by the Secretary-General (79 per cent)
Unanimous favourable recommendations of the Joint Appeals Board rejected by the Secretary-General (9 per cent)

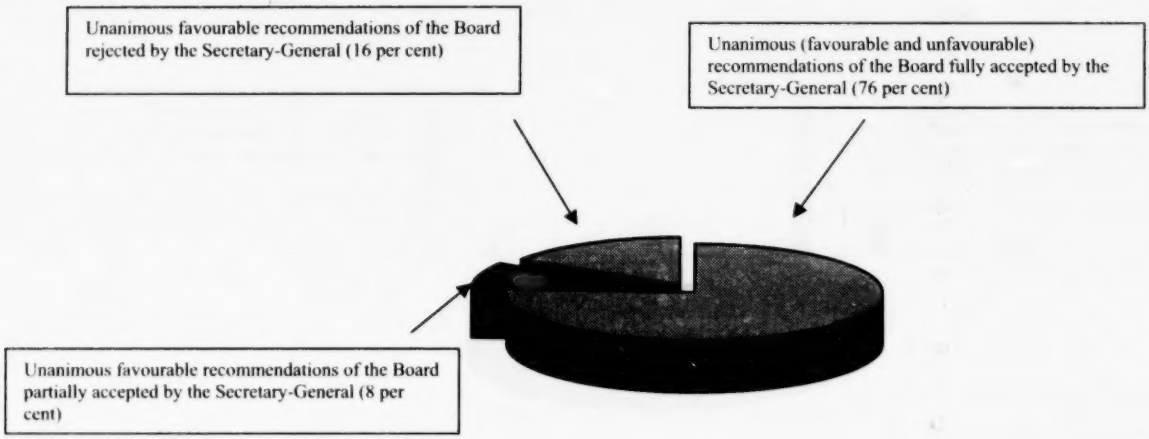
Table 3

Decisions of the Secretary-General on unanimous recommendations of the Joint Appeals Boards on appeals and requests for suspension of action in 2006

Location of Joint Appeals Board	*Decisions on reports of the Board*	*Unanimous recommendations of the Board*	*Unanimous recommendations of the Board fully accepted by the Secretary-General*	*Unanimous recommendations of the Board partially accepted by the Secretary-General*	*Unanimous favourable recommendations of the Board rejected by the Secretary-General*	*Unanimous unfavourable recommendations of the Board*
New York	64	62	46 (74%)	5 (8%)	11 (18%)	30 (48%)
Geneva	30	30	25 (83%)	2 (7%)	3 (10%)	20 (67%)
Vienna	2	2	1 (50%)	0	1 (50%)	1 (50%)
Nairobi	6	5	3 (60%)	1 (20%)	1 (20%)	2 (40%)
Total	**102**	**99**	**75 (76%)**	**8 (8%)**	**16 (16%)**	**53 (54%)**

84% (full and partial acceptances)

Figure III
Decisions of the Secretary-General on unanimous recommendations of the Joint Appeals Boards on appeals and requests for suspension of action in 2006


Unanimous favourable recommendations of the Board rejected by the Secretary-General (16 per cent)
Unanimous (favourable and unfavourable) recommendations of the Board fully accepted by the Secretary-General (76 per cent)
Unanimous favourable recommendations of the Board partially accepted by the Secretary-General (8 per cent)

9. As can be seen from tables 2 and 3 and figures II and III above, the percentage of full and partial acceptances by the Secretary-General of unanimous recommendations of the Joint Appeals Board decreased in 2006 compared with the previous year (91 per cent for 2005 and 84 per cent for 2006). The percentage of rejections by the Secretary-General of unanimous recommendations of the Board that were favourable to the appellants was low in both periods (9 per cent in 2005 and 16 per cent in 2006).

10. This is in line with the stated policy of the Secretary-General, which is normally to accept unanimous recommendations unless there is a compelling reason of law or policy not to do so. In all such instances, the decisions of the Secretary-General provide detailed reasons for such rejection, which in most cases is attributable to the incorrect application of law or policy by the Joint Appeals Board or inadequate fact-finding that is not supported by the available evidence. With the increased training for members of the Joint Appeals Boards and the Joint Disciplinary Committees in the applicable law and policies of the Organization and the availability of the web-based repository of the recent jurisprudence of the United Nations Administrative Tribunal (encompassing jurisprudence on judgements rendered from 1980 onwards), the Secretary-General trusts that unanimous recommendations will be both more reliably supported by the evidence and reflective of the applicable law, and that consequently the percentage of acceptable recommendations would remain at current levels or rise. The Secretary-General, however, would still have the discretionary authority to reject unanimous recommendations of the Joint Appeals Board should he find that it is in the interests of the Organization to do so.

11. During the reporting period for 2006, in addition to the regular functions required of them, the various secretariats of the Joint Appeals Boards were involved in the following activities:

(a) Providing advice and assistance to the Redesign Panel on the United Nations system of administration of justice and to management on issues relating to the various aspects of the reform of the internal justice system;

(b) Contributing to the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General on various aspects of the reform of the internal justice system;

(c) Providing reports on the status of the work of the Joint Appeals Boards to various oversight bodies, at their request;

(d) Drafting new rules for the Joint Appeals Boards and implementing time limits recommended by the Office of Internal Oversight Services;

(e) Preparing for plenary meetings of the Joint Appeals Boards and Joint Disciplinary Committees;

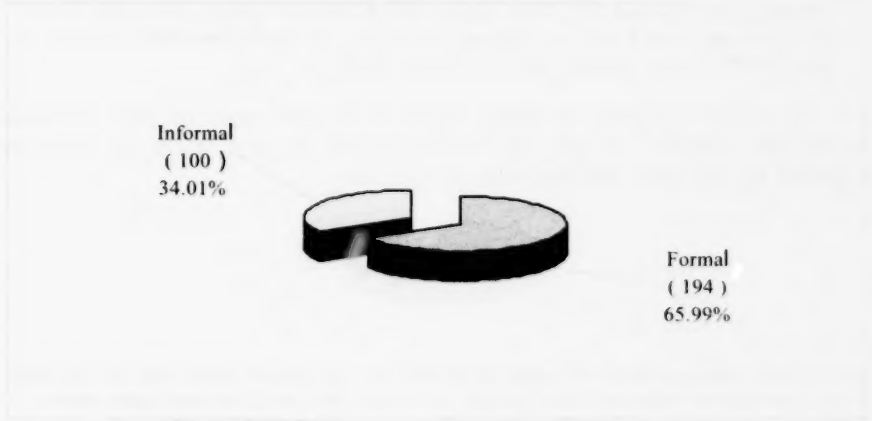
(f) Preparation of training materials and making training presentations for participants in the internal justice system;

(g) Creating, maintaining and improving websites and databases.

III. Disposition of cases and work of the Panel of Counsel

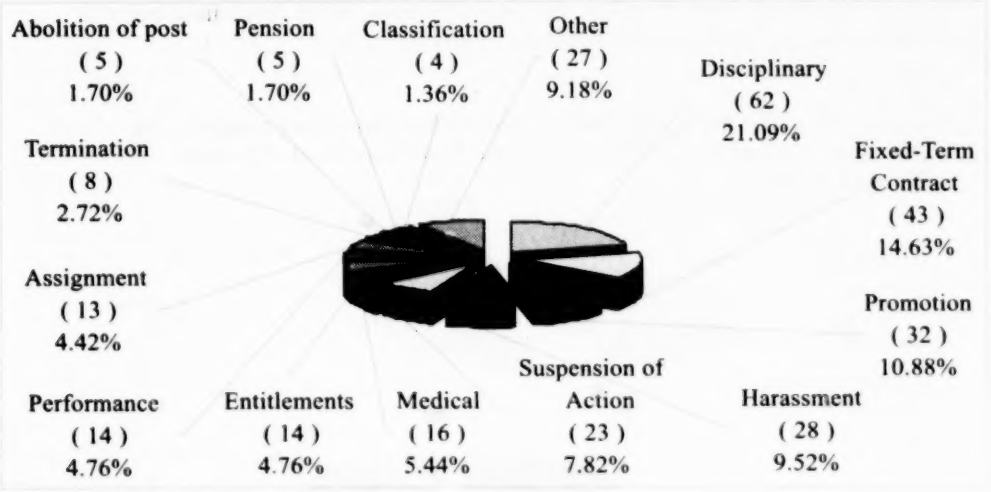
12. In 2006, 294 new cases were brought to the Panel of Counsel in New York, compared with 266 new cases in 2005, an increase of 11 per cent.[2] Of the 294 cases brought to the Panel of Counsel in 2006, 194 went through the formal appeals process and 100 were dealt with informally (see figure IV). In 2005, there were 150 formal cases and 116 informal cases. Formal cases increased by 29 per cent from 2005 to 2006, while informal cases decreased by 14 per cent.

Figure IV
Distribution of informal and formal cases in 2006



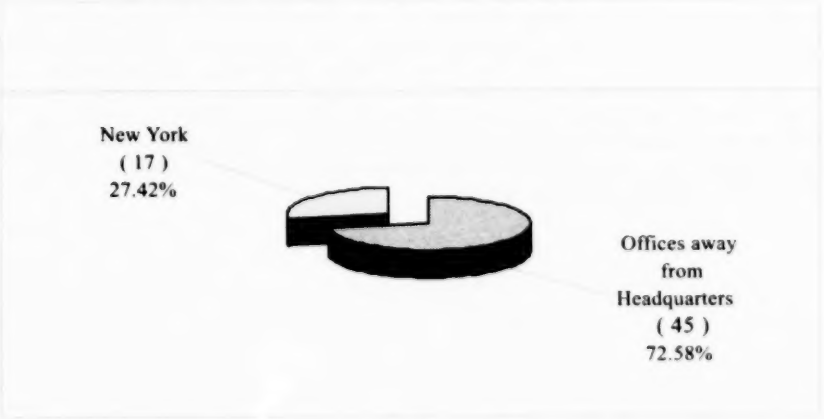
[2] Cases reported as new cases in previous reports are not included here, although many continue to involve the time and attention of both counsel and the Coordinator.

Figure VI
Subject and respective number of new cases dealt with by the Panel of Counsel during 2006



15. As seen in figure VII below, in 2006 a substantial majority (73 per cent) of disciplinary cases represented by members of the Panel of Counsel involved clients who were based in offices away from United Nations Headquarters and who were not therefore able to be physically present at their own hearings.

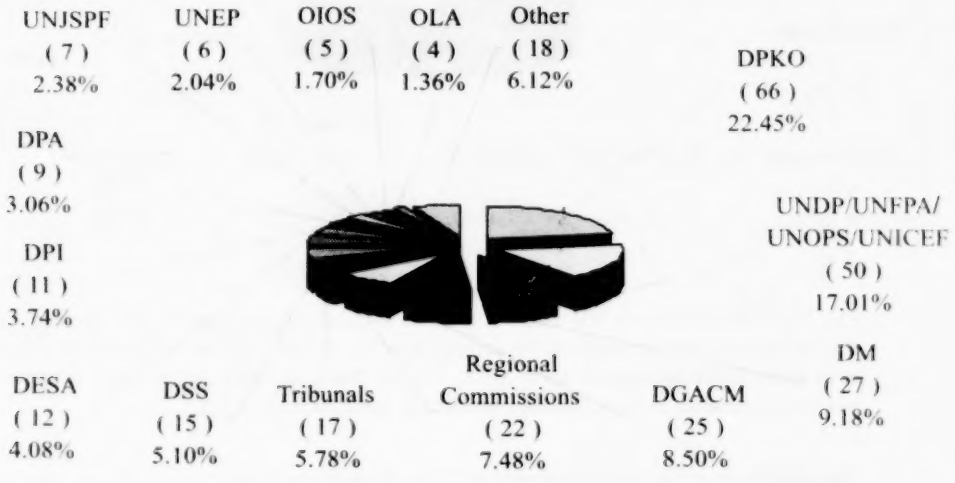
Figure VII
Distribution of disciplinary cases by duty station in 2006



16. As can be seen from figure VIII below, many of the requests for assistance addressed to the New York Panel of Counsel during 2006 came from staff members in departments and United Nations funds and programmes involved in field operations, in particular the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

Figure VIII

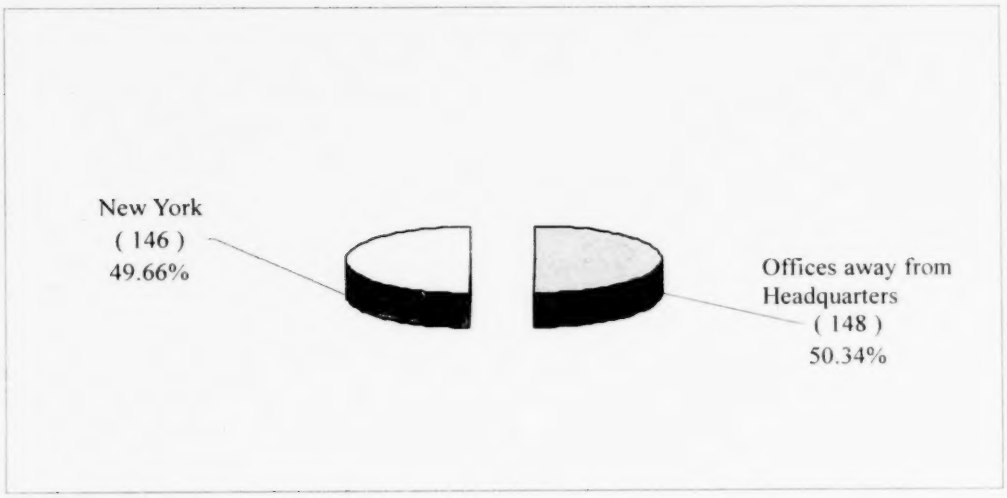
Departments of the Secretariat and United Nations funds and programmes where most requests for assistance from the New York Panel of Counsel originated in 2006



Abbreviations: DESA, Department of Economic and Social Affairs; DGACM, Department for General Assembly and Conference Management; DM, Department of Management; DPA, Department of Political Affairs; DPI, Department of Public Information; DPKO, Department of Peacekeeping Operations; DSS, Department of Safety and Security; OIOS, Office of Internal Oversight Services; OLA, Office of Legal Affairs; Tribunals, International Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia and International Tribunal for Rwanda; UNDP, United Nations Development Programme; UNEP, United Nations Environment Programme; UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund; UNICEF, United Nations Children's Fund; UNJSPF; UNOPS, United Nations Office for Project Services.

17. Figure IX below shows the distribution of cases in 2006 between New York and offices away from Headquarters.

Figure IX
Distribution of cases by duty station in 2006



18. The General Assembly may wish to take note of the present report.

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Item 72 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Promotion and protection of human rights: implementation of human rights instruments

Status of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report on the financial status and activities of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery contains the recommendations adopted by the Board of Trustees of the Fund at its twelfth session, held in Geneva from 12 to 16 February 2007, which were approved by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on behalf of the Secretary-General on 21 March 2007. The report updates the report of the Secretary-General submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session (A/61/751).

* A/62/150.

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I. Mandate of the Fund

1. In its resolution 46/122 of 17 December 1991, the General Assembly established the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, which receives voluntary contributions from Governments, non-governmental organizations, other private and public entities and individuals. The purpose of the Fund is to provide financial assistance to representatives of non-governmental organizations from different regions that deal with issues related to contemporary forms of slavery so they may participate in the deliberations of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery and to extend humanitarian, legal and financial aid, through established channels of assistance, to individuals whose human rights have been severely violated as a result of contemporary forms of slavery.

II. Administration and Board of Trustees

2. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 46/122, the Fund is administered by the Secretary-General, through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), in accordance with the relevant financial regulations and rules of the United Nations on general trust funds for humanitarian assistance and with the advice of a Board of Trustees.

3. The Board of Trustees is composed of five experts with relevant experience in the field of human rights and, in particular, with issues of contemporary forms of slavery, serving in their personal capacities. The current members of the Board of Trustees, appointed by the Secretary-General for a three-year renewable term, in consultation with the Chairperson of the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, with due regard to equitable geographical distribution, are José de Souza Martins (Brazil), Prateep Unsongtham Hata (Thailand), Cheikh Saad-Bouh Kamara (Chairperson, Mauritania), Gulnara Shahinian (Armenia) and David Weissbrodt (United States of America).

III. Beneficiaries

4. In accordance with the selection criteria adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/122, the beneficiaries of assistance from the Fund shall be: (a) representatives of non-governmental organizations dealing with issues of contemporary forms of slavery who would not, in the opinion of the Board of Trustees, be able to attend the session of the Working Group without the assistance provided by the Fund and who would be able to contribute to a deeper knowledge on the part of the Working Group of the problems relating to contemporary forms of slavery; and (b) individuals whose human rights have been severely violated as a result of contemporary forms of slavery.

IV. Grant cycle

A. Admissibility of new applications and selection process

5. The deadline for submitting applications for travel or project grants for 2007 was 15 September 2006. Admissible applications received were examined by the Board of Trustees at its twelfth session, held in Geneva from 12 to 16 February 2007. The recommendations for grants adopted by the Board of Trustees at that session were approved by the High Commissioner for Human Rights, on behalf of the Secretary-General, on 21 March 2007, and the grants approved are to be paid in April and May 2007. Beneficiaries of provisional travel grants will attend the session of the Working Group, if held in Geneva in 2007. Beneficiaries of project grants will be required to provide the secretariat of the Fund with narrative and financial reports on the use of their grants before 1 November 2007. Organizations that can prove that it is impossible at that time to provide final reports will be required to provide interim reports by 1 November 2007 and final reports by 1 January 2008. Until satisfactory reports on the use of previous grants are received, no new project grant can be paid to these beneficiaries.

6. The deadline for submitting applications for travel or project grants for 2008 is 15 September 2007. Admissible applications received will be examined by the Board of Trustees at its thirteenth session, to be held in Geneva from 4 to 8 February 2008.

7. Admissible application forms are verified as to their conformity with the approved selection criteria and additional information is requested from the organization if necessary. Reference organizations and specialized networks are also consulted if necessary. The complete application form is then summarized and analysed by the secretariat in accordance with the selection criteria, to facilitate the work of the Board of Trustees. At its annual session, the Board of Trustees reviews all applications declared admissible, including the original application form, the summary analysis prepared by the secretariat and any other relevant information. The Board of Trustees then makes recommendations to the Secretary-General in accordance with the guidelines of the Fund and Board. Following the session, the secretariat reviews all the recommendations of the Board of Trustees for consistency with relevant United Nations administrative and financial rules and regulations. The High Commissioner for Human Rights approves, on behalf of the Secretary-General, the recommendations that are acceptable, together with any new best practices identified during the annual session.

8. The beneficiary organizations are requested to accept all the conditions attached to the grant, such as providing narrative and financial reports on the use of grants by a given deadline. Upon receipt of that confirmation, the secretariat of the Fund requests the financial services of the United Nations Office at Geneva to pay the project grant promptly. In the case of travel grants, the beneficiary receives an airplane ticket from his or her local travel agency and then a daily subsistence allowance in the form of a cheque upon arrival at the session of the Working Group.

B. Monitoring and evaluation by the Board and secretariat

9. The secretariat reviews all narrative and financial reports received from beneficiary organizations on the use of project grants and asks for additional information, if needed. OHCHR field presences and other United Nations field offices, such as those of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), may be requested to provide to the secretariat of the Fund additional information on the organization or project. Travel grants are closely monitored before and during the session of the Working Group. Beneficiaries are requested to provide a copy of any statement they make during the session as part of their reporting obligation.

10. In performing their evaluation, the Board and the secretariat carry out the following activities:

(a) At its annual session, the Board of Trustees reviews the situation of all travel and project grants allocated in previous years. When the Board is satisfied with the reporting by a given organization, it recommends closing the file. If the report is not complete, the Board makes a recommendation that specific additional information be requested. No new grants are allocated to that organization until the Board is satisfied with its report;

(b) Board members may visit projects financed by the Fund within their geographic region; the secretariat of the Fund may also visit projects;

(c) Board members, who are respected United Nations experts in the field of contemporary forms of slavery, may establish, if needed, direct contact with project leaders in the field, during sessions of the Board of Trustees, or at relevant human rights meetings, in order to better evaluate the use of the grants. The secretariat also meets with project leaders;

(d) Reference organizations and specialized networks may be invited to the session of the Board of Trustees at which their applications are examined in order, inter alia, to provide additional information on specific organizations or projects, answer questions and explain their activities to the Board;

(e) Concerning travel grants, the Chairman, or another Board member if possible, attends the Working Group session in order to meet with all beneficiaries present and assess the impact of their participation on the deliberations of the Working Group. A decision on the future of the Working Group will taken by the Human Rights Council at its session in September 2007.

V. Twelfth session of the Board of Trustees

11. The twelfth session of the Board of Trustees of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery was held at the Palais Wilson in Geneva from 12 to 16 February 2007. The session was opened by Ibrahim Wani, Chief of the Research and Right to Development Branch of OHCHR. On behalf of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mr. Wani expressed appreciation to Mr. Kamara and Mr. de Souza Martins, who would both be completing their final term on the Board at the end of 2007, for their many years of expert advice and their dedication to combating contemporary forms of slavery. He drew the attention of the Board members to the recent evaluation of the Fund that had been commissioned by OHCHR following a recommendation by the Board at its previous session and

undertaken by the Office of Internal Oversight Services, and to the importance of the involvement of that Office in the review process.

12. All five Board members attended the session. Mr. Kamara was re-elected Chairman.

13. During the 10 meetings of its session, the Board examined information prepared by the secretariat concerning the financial situation of the Fund, fund-raising efforts, applications for new travel and project grants, the implementation of recommendations adopted at its eleventh session and the implementation of the recommendations approved between 2001 and 2006, including those concerning project and travel grants and the development of policies for future grant activities.

14. The Board met with representatives of donor and other interested Governments, staff members of OHCHR working on other activities relevant to the mandate of the Fund, and representatives of other United Nations agencies.

15. Under the agenda item relating to the developments in the United Nations system concerning relevant mandates, the Board met with the OHCHR Resource Mobilization Unit, the Communications Section and the secretariat of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery, and was briefed on the recent work of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially in women and children.

16. A presentation on the preliminary findings of the review of the Fund was made for the Board members by the evaluation team of the Office of Internal Oversight Services, and the Board discussed the preliminary findings in the expectation of further discussions once the draft review findings were available in written form.

A. Financial situation of the Fund

17. According to information received from the administration of OHCHR, at the twelfth session of the Board of Trustees, $469,909 was available from new contributions paid since the eleventh session (see table below) and from the previous unspent balance.

List of contributions received for the twelfth session[a]

Donor	*Amount (United States dollars)*	*Date paid*	*Number of contributions*
Belgium	32 894.14	11 January 2007	1
Cyprus	7 376.92	10 April 2006	4
Greece	26 350.46	4 December 2006	3
Holy See	1 500.00	26 June 2006	7
Ireland	59 241.71	16 March 2006	3
Israel	5 000.00	15 December 2005	3
Israel	5 000.00	21 December 2006	4
Japan	25 000.00	20 November 2006	8
Luxembourg	32 894.14	7 February 2007	4

[a] Based on information available at the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

Donor	*Amount (United States dollars)*	*Date paid*	*Number of contributions*
South Africa	8 104.65	9 February 2006	7
Saudi Arabia	20 000.00	26 April 2006	3
Thailand	2 376.00	14 February 2007	2
Turkey	10 000.00	5 July 2006	2
Prateep Hata	310.08	8 February 2006	1
Yorio Shiokawa	379.00	14 March 2006	12
Teachers and students at the Istituto Tecnico Commerciale Statale	848.27	19 January 2006	14
Oscar Romero	731.22	22 May 2006	15
Albino, Italy	595.37	15 January 2007	16
Susan Morris	1 500.00	8 March 2006	1
Harry Parsekian	250.00	9 October 2006	1
David Weissbrodt	350.00	12 February 2007	2
Total	**240 725.96**		

B. Review of travel grants approved in 2006

18. The Board reviewed the participation of the beneficiaries of travel grants who attended the session of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery in 2006, and noted that 7 of the 12 beneficiaries selected attended the reduced session at its revised dates.

19. The Board was briefed by Mr. de Souza Martins, who attended the session as a representative of the Board and introduced the item of the agenda of the Working Group relating to the activities of the Fund.

20. The Board took note of the report by the secretariat on the two meetings with the beneficiaries that were organized by the secretariat at the beginning and the end of the Working Group session. The purpose of the meetings was to answer their questions and give them the opportunity to share their ideas.

21. In its resolution 2006/17, the Subcommission on the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights expressed its appreciation for the valuable contribution made by victims of slavery and slavery-like practices and their representatives, whose participation in the session of the Working Group to authenticate perspectives on subsisting slavery and slavery-like practices had been facilitated by grants from the Fund.

C. Review of project grants approved in the period from 2001 to 2006

22. The Board reviewed the narrative and financial reports on the use of project grants paid between 2001 and 2006 and adopted relevant recommendations. In this context, the Board recommended that the file for 32 projects be closed, as the organizations concerned had provided satisfactory narrative and financial reports on the use of grants. In some cases, the Board recommended that the secretariat request

OHCHR field presences or UNDP to assist in the follow-up and evaluation of the projects.

23. The Board noted with satisfaction the increased cooperation with field offices.

D. Consideration of new applications and recommendations for travel grants

24. Before beginning its deliberations, the Board heard a briefing from the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery on questions regarding the status of its next session. The Human Rights Council was expected to take decisions on future expert advice mechanisms to perform some of the functions of the parent body of the Working Group and the Working Group itself before the end of June 2007. Discussions about the final form of these mechanisms and when a session would be held are ongoing.

25. The Board examined 23 applications for travel grants amounting to approximately $64,909 from representatives of non-governmental organizations, including victims of contemporary forms of slavery in 12 countries.

26. In the light of the selection criteria, the Board recommended four provisional travel grants, amounting to an estimated $9,465 for beneficiaries to attend the thirty-second session of the Working Group. However, since the dates of the session had not yet been decided and the cost of travel can vary widely depending on the dates, the Board decided to allocate $11,000 in the cost plan to cover that expenditure. Provided that the conditions attached to the grant were met, it was expected that all travel grants would be paid in ample time before the next session of the Working Group.

27. The Board stipulated that these funds be held, pending a decision on the 2007 session of the Working Group, to fund the travel of participants from non-governmental organizations. Should a decision not be taken by 31 July 2007, the Board recommended that the funds be reallocated to project grants.

28. The Board recommended that travel costs be authorized to enable the Chairperson or another member of the Board to participate in the thirty-second session of the Working Group that may be held in 2007 in Geneva. The Board member would introduce the report on the Fund under the relevant agenda item, as well as meet and introduce to the Working Group the beneficiaries of travel grants attending the session.

29. The Board recommended that the secretariat of the Working Group, or any future expert advice body, continue to be invited to its annual session to inform them of its priority areas of concern, so that the Board could take them into consideration in its selection of applications for travel grants and discuss areas of possible cooperation.

E. Consideration of new applications and recommendations for project grants

30. The Board examined 129 applications for project grants amounting to approximately $1,688,482. Of the applications received, 36 were submitted by

African countries (Burkina Faso (2), Benin (1), Cameroon (3), Central African Republic (1), Democratic Republic of the Congo (2), Ghana (5), Kenya (5), Niger (4), Nigeria (5), Uganda (8)); 5 were submitted by North and South American countries (Argentina (2), Canada (1), Colombia (2)); 73 by Asian countries (Bangladesh (6), India (57), Iraq (1), Nepal (2), Pakistan (5), Sri Lanka (1), Thailand (1)); and 15 by European and other countries (Armenia (1), Azerbaijan (2), Georgia (1), Israel (1), Romania (1), Russian Federation (6), Serbia (1), Spain (2)).

31. In the light of the selection criteria, the Board of Trustees recommended 33 project grants for a total amount of $269,200. Subsequently one grant was cancelled for technical reasons and another one was added, bringing the total amount to $272,200 (see annex). These grants will assist non-governmental organizations in 22 countries: 6 in Africa (Burkina Faso (1), Cameroon (1), Kenya (1), Niger (2), Nigeria (1), Uganda (1)); 2 in the Americas (Argentina (2), Canada (1)); 7 in Asia (Bangladesh (1), India (8), Iraq (1), Nepal (2), Pakistan (1), Sri Lanka (1), Thailand (1)); and 11 in Europe and other countries (Azerbaijan (2), Georgia (1), Israel (1), Romania (1), Russian Federation (1), Serbia (1), Spain (1)).

32. The Board recommended that, if funds became available because particular grants were not allocated or travel was not possible, the secretariat should reallocate those funds to organizations to support projects that had been approved but had received less than the full amount requested owing to the lack of resources.

33. The Board took into account the importance of the gender dimension and national and regional distribution when considering applications for travel and project grants.

F. Fund-raising

34. Based on the available funds, the Board adopted its revised cost plan for 2007.

35. The Board held its annual meeting with regular and new donor Governments, interested Governments and other donors on 15 February 2007. The meeting was attended by representatives of Algeria, Armenia, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, the Holy See, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Mauritania, the Netherlands, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and Thailand.

36. The Chairman and Board members thanked donors for their generous contributions to the Fund and gave examples of how the grants were assisting victims of contemporary forms of slavery.

37. The representatives of several States expressed their support for the Fund and its work. The representative of the Netherlands informed the Board that the Government had contributed extra resources for the review of the Fund and expressed the hope that the results would be available soon. The representatives of other States expressed their interest in the findings of the evaluation of the Fund and their concerns regarding the shape and functions of a future expert advice body, the possible continuation of the Working Group and the possible appointment of a special rapporteur on slavery. Thailand informed the Board of its recent contribution to the Fund.

38. The Board also met with the Chief of the OHCHR Resource Mobilization Unit. Based on that discussion, the Board decided to explore creative means of fund-raising, including ways of approaching the private sector.

39. The Board agreed to address, not later than September 2007, a letter signed by the Chairman to all Permanent Missions and Delegations to the United Nations Office at Geneva appealing for contributions to the Fund. The letter would also be used by the Board members in their follow-up activities in their respective regions as a basis for contacting States and other potential donors.

G. Global review of the Fund

40. The Board recalled its recommendation from the eleventh session that a global review of the work of the Fund be undertaken. Such a review would draw on the recent experience of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Torture, taking into account the differences both in the nature of the work and the size of that Fund.

41. The Office of Internal Oversight Services conducted a review of the Fund from November 2006 to January 2007. The objective of the review was to assess the impact of the Fund and the efficiency and effectiveness of its processes. The preliminary draft findings were discussed with the OHCHR secretariat on 2 February 2007 and presented to the Board of Trustees on 12 February 2007.

42. The initial findings were that the Fund had succeeded in providing direct assistance to a number of small, grass-roots non-governmental organizations that were supporting victims of contemporary forms of slavery. The grantees appreciated the ease of access to the funds; in some cases, the seed money from the Fund enabled the start-up of new initiatives.

43. There were areas that required improvement, such as strengthening the pre-screening of applications, the establishment of information management systems and the monitoring of projects to ensure that the funds granted reached the intended beneficiaries.

44. In the light of the preliminary findings, the Board recommended that:

(a) Additional measures be taken to strengthen the pre-screening of grantees, starting with the grants approved at the current session;

(b) The secretariat take steps to computerize the management of the Fund, adapting the tools being developed for the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Torture;

(c) The letter of acceptance be revised to be consistent with the standard grant agreement of OHCHR and the conditions therein, and that it should include a request to organizations that they submit a bank signature page with the agreement;

(d) The secretariat explore the possibility of regional meetings with beneficiaries of the Fund should the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery be discontinued, in order to provide an alternate forum for representatives of non-governmental organizations and victims of contemporary forms of slavery to share their experiences;

(e) An agenda item entitled "Follow-up to recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight Services" be included in its agenda for 2008.

45. The Board expressed its appreciation to the Office of Internal Oversight Services for its collaboration and looked forward to receiving the final report.

H. Awareness-raising

46. The Board recognized that 25 March 2007 would mark the 200th anniversary of the formal ending of the transatlantic slave trade and expressed its strong support for the commemorative events that had been planned worldwide.

47. The Board also stressed the importance of annual observances to mark the United Nations International Day for the Abolition of Slavery (2 December) to raise awareness of the issue.

48. The Board recommended that the secretariat ensure the availability of existing information materials, such as the booklet entitled *The United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery* and the special issue paper entitled "Abolishing Slavery and its Contemporary Forms", and continue to distribute them widely.

49. The Board noted the expanded communication capacity of OHCHR and recommended that the Office look into ways to make available the wealth of documentary materials on the work of the Fund, such as photographs and stories of people who had benefited from the Fund, to give a human face to its work, and look into other popular means of communication.

50. The Board recommended that OHCHR encourage its field offices, special rapporteurs and other partners to disseminate information on the Fund.

51. In the light of the ongoing changes in the human rights machinery, the Board recommended revising OHCHR fact sheet No. 14, entitled "Contemporary forms of slavery", when possible, in order to include a reference to the activities of the Fund and Board.

VI. Implementation of recommendations adopted at the twelfth session

52. The recommendations made by the Board of Trustees at its twelfth session were approved on 21 March 2007 by the High Commissioner for Human Rights on behalf of the Secretary-General. Owing to the establishment of the Human Rights Council, the thirty-second session of the Working Group on Contemporary Forms of Slavery has not been held. The payment of 30 out of 33 project grants had been approved and processed as at 15 June 2007.[1]

[1] Two projects are pending receipt of the signed agreement and confirmation of banking details from the organization. One project is pending receipt of confirmation of the banking account.

VII. Evaluation of the functioning of the Fund

53. As recommended by the Board of Trustees at its eleventh session, a global review of the work of the Fund, drawing on the recent experience of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund for Victims of Torture, with a view to assessing the impact of the Fund and enhancing its efficiency and effectiveness, was undertaken by the Office of Internal Oversight Services from November 2006 to January 2007 and submitted to the High Commissioner in June 2007.[2]

54. The measures taken by the secretariat of the Fund to implement the recommendations resulting from the global review will be described in the next report of the Secretary-General, to be submitted to the General Assembly at its sixty-third session.

VIII. Needs assessment for 2008

55. Applications for grants amounting to approximately $1,625,732 were received in 2007. The Board of Trustees was able to recommend the allocation of grants amounting to approximately $278,665. In the view of the Board, in order to be able to fulfil its mandate and to satisfy the new applications envisaged for 2007, the Fund would need new contributions amounting to at least $793,500 prior to the thirteenth session of the Board of Trustees,[3] that was recommended to be held from 4 to 8 February 2008.

IX. How to contribute to the Fund

56. Governments, non-governmental organizations and other private or public entities can contribute to the Fund. Donors should indicate "For the Slavery Fund, account SH" on a payment order. For information on how to contribute, donors are kindly requested to contact the secretariat of the Fund at:

Secretariat of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
United Nations
CH 1211 Geneva 10
Switzerland
Telephone: + (41) (22) 928 9737 or 928 9164
Fax: + (41) (22) 928 9066

X. Conclusions and recommendations

57. **The Board of Trustees of the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery takes note of the increasing interest of non-governmental organizations in the Fund and the growing number of**

[2] The report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services is available, upon request, from the Secretariat.

[3] According to the cost plan approved by the Board of Trustees.

admissible applications received by the secretariat. In order to be able to satisfy a sufficient number of the new applications envisaged for 2008, the Fund would need at least an additional $793,500 prior to the opening of the thirteenth session of the Board.

58. **The Board invites Governments to provide contributions to allow the Fund to expand and provide assistance to the victims of slavery. Donors are invited to contribute to the Fund by the end of 2007 to allow for the contributions to be duly recorded by the United Nations Treasurer in advance of the annual session of the Board.**

Annex

List of project grants approved by the Board of Trustees at the twelfth session

Organization	*Country*	*Title of project or aspect covered*	*Amount approved (United States dollars)*
Defence for Children International	Argentina	Prevention and elimination of child smuggling and trafficking in children in border areas for the purpose of contemporary forms of slavery	5 000
Erradicación del Trabajo Infantil para la Reinserción Escolar	Argentina	Commercial sexual exploitation of children, a worsening problem in Third World countries	10 000
Initiative Group on Human Rights Protection in Nagorny Karabakh	Azerbaijan	Prevention of trafficking and protection of women's rights of more vulnerable strata of society	9 000
Yuva Humanitarian Center	Azerbaijan	Monitoring and analysis of the adoption of orphan children in Azerbaijan as a preventive measure against the trafficking of children	9 200
Hotline Human Rights Bangladesh	Bangladesh	Child rights and education	10 000
GRADE-FRB	Burkina Faso	"Teenbguundum" (to combat trafficking in women and children)	15 000
Catholic Relief Services	Cameroon	Project for assistance to child victims of trafficking in the departments of Mezam and Boyo (North-West Province of Cameroon)	5 000
New Opportunities for Women Canada	Canada	Residential safe home programme	1 000
Democrat Women's Organization	Georgia	Information is power: preventing human trafficking	8 000
Sarvdeshik Arya Yuwak Parishad	India	Eradication of child marriage	5 000
The Cuddapah Rural Development for youth welfare Samithi	India	Primary health and education as well as other development activities for bonded child labourers	7 000
All India Women's Conference	India	Adhar (women's own ground) to live in dignity	7 000
VEDIKA	India	Hope for life	10 000
Association for the Social, Educational and Charitable Activities for the Poor Communities	India	Child labour rehabilitation programme in Renigunta, Chittoor District	7 000
Social and Economic Assistance for Rural and City Habitant	India	Human rights campaign for eunuchs	7 000
Integrated Rural Development Organisation	India	Bonded labour rehabilitation programme in Ananthapuram District	7 000

Organization	*Country*	*Title of project or aspect covered*	*Amount approved (United States dollars)*
Voluntary Action for Integrated Development Society	India	Programme for the reformation and rehabilitation of girls ("Jogins") exploited for the purpose of sexual slavery	10 000
New Iraqi Woman Organization	Iraq	Training courses for war orphans on computerization and sewing	10 000
Hotline for Migrant Workers	Israel	Combating trafficking for labour	7 000
Ogiek Peoples' Development Program	Kenya	Freeing Ogiek community minds from misuse and slavery	7 000
Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights (USA)	Nepal	Sankhu-Palubari community school project	5 000
Children-Women in Social Service and Human Rights	Nepal	Ending slavery practices in domestic work	14 000
Organisation pour la Prévention du Travail des Enfants au Niger	Niger	Aid to child victims of the worst forms of labour at the gold-panning site at Komababgou	11 000
Association Timidria	Niger	Project to support the socio-economic reintegration of 50 women victims of slavery in the departments of Abalak and Tchintabaradène (Tahoua region, Niger)	10 000
Network for Justice and Democracy	Nigeria	Strategies to combat human trafficking through mobilization, research and advocacy	10 000
Identity, Merge and Action	Pakistan	Rehabilitation of children working in hazardous conditions	10 000
World Vision International	Romania	Stop using Roma and Romanian children for begging	5 000
Irkutsk Public Organization, Crisis Centre for Women	Russian Federation	Increasing understanding and awareness of human trafficking among Russian youth	10 000
ASTRA — Anti trafficking action	Serbia	Daily centre for trafficking survivors and support of the referral mechanism in implementing the human rights approach	10 000
Adoratrices — Proyecto Esperanza	Spain	"Project Hope"	5 000
World Vision Lanka	Sri Lanka	Improving the implementation of the rights of street children in Sri Lanka	6 000
Hill Area and Community Development Foundation	Thailand	Tribal youth development for anti-trafficking	10 000
Huys Link Community Initiative	Uganda	Community action against child labour project	10 000
Total: 33 projects			**272 200**

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General Assembly

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Sixty-second session
Item 33 of the provisional agenda*
United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East

Report of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine

Note by the Secretary-General

The sixty-first report of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine, covering the period from 1 September 2006 to 31 August 2007, was transmitted by the Chairperson of the Commission for communication to the States Members of the United Nations in accordance with paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 512 (VI) and paragraph 2 of Assembly resolution 61/112. The text of the report of the Commission is contained in the annex to the present note.

* A/62/150.

07-44879 (E) 090807

Annex

Sixty-first report of the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine

In paragraph 2 of its resolution 61/112, the General Assembly requested the United Nations Conciliation Commission for Palestine to report to the Assembly as appropriate, but no later than 1 September 2007. The Commission notes its report of 21 July 2006 (A/61/172, annex) and observes that it has nothing new to report since its submission.

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General Assembly

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Sixty-second session
Item 68 (a) of the provisional agenda*
Promotion and protection of the rights of children

Status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The General Assembly, by its resolution 44/25 of 20 November 1989, adopted the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Convention was opened for signature in New York on 26 January 1990 and entered into force on 2 September 1990, the thirtieth day after the deposit with the Secretary-General of the twentieth instrument of ratification or accession. As at 30 June 2007, the Convention had been ratified or acceded to by 193 States.

By its resolution 54/263 of 25 May 2000, the Assembly adopted two Optional Protocols to the Convention. The Optional Protocols entered into force on 12 February and 18 January 2002, respectively. As at 30 June 2007, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the involvement of children in armed conflict had been ratified by 116 States and signed by 122 States and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography had been ratified by 121 States and signed by 115 States.

* A/62/150.

07-44885 (E) 090807

I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 61/146, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its sixty-second session a report containing information on the status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The present report is submitted in accordance with that request.

II. Status of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

2. As at 30 June 2007, the Convention on the Rights of the Child had been ratified or acceded to by 193 States. In addition, two States had signed the Convention.[1]

3. As at 30 June 2007, the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the involvement of children in armed conflict had been ratified by 116 States and signed by 122 States and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography had been ratified by 121 States and signed by 115 States.[1]

III. Implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

4. During the reporting period, the Committee on the Rights of the Child held its forty-third to forty-fifth sessions at the United Nations Office at Geneva, from 11 to 29 September 2006, 15 January to 2 February 2007 and 21 May to 8 June 2007, respectively.

5. Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 59/261, the Committee met in two chambers during its forty-third session and in plenary during its forty-fourth and forty-fifth sessions. The Chairperson of the Committee will present to the General Assembly at its sixty-second session an assessment of the working methods and the progress made, including in particular the experience of the two-chamber working method and the views of the Committee on ways of further improving its working methods.[2]

6. In conformity with rule 75 of its provisional rules of procedure, the Committee on the Rights of the Child has decided periodically to devote one day of general discussion to a specific article of the Convention or to a theme related to the rights of the child in order to enhance understanding of the content and implications of the Convention. At its forty-third session, the Committee devoted its day of general discussion to the theme of child participation in accordance with article 12 of the Convention. Following the general discussion, the Committee adopted a set of recommendations (see CRC/C/43/3).

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[1] For the list of States that have signed, ratified or acceded to the Convention and Optional Protocols, as well as the dates of their signature, ratification or accession, see www.ohchr.org or untreaty.un.org.

[2] For the reports of the Committee on the sessions, see CRC/C/43/3, CRC/C/44/3 and CRC/C/45/3 (to be issued).